


## MEMO

**Submitted by:** Ceil Scandone 

**Subject:** Bay Area Green Business Program  
2009 Status Report and Certified Public Agency Recognition

**Date:** July 16, 2009

### Executive Summary

The Bay Area Green Business Program (Program) was initiated in 1996 by ABAG's Hazardous Waste Management Facility Allocation Committee. The Program assists and recognizes businesses, organizations and public agency facilities that voluntarily exceed regulatory compliance to prevent pollution, conserve resources, and minimize waste.

Annually, staff provides a Program update and asks the Executive Board to recognize the public agencies and officials whose facilities have recently been designated as Green Businesses. Since the last recognition event in March 2007, 25 public agency facilities have been added to our Directory (see Attachment A). The number includes a very significant "first." This year, we are proud to announce the first certification of a U.S. Congressman's office: the district office of United States Congresswoman Anna Eshoo in Palo Alto.

### Recommended Action

Staff requests that the Executive Board recognize the 25 Certified Green Business public facilities as environmental leaders who are protecting the environment and public health, providing a safer workplace, reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, and setting an exemplary example for businesses, residents and other public agencies in their communities and our region.

### Next Steps

Introduce and present the 25 public agency honorees with Certificates of Recognition for their environmentally responsible actions and leadership in achieving Green Business Certification.

**Attachments:** Staff Memo and List of Honorees



# ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS


Representing City and County Governments of the San Francisco Bay Area



ABAG

## M E M O

**To:** Executive Board

**From:** Ceil Scandone   
Senior Regional Planner/Green Business Coordinator

**Subject:** Bay Area Green Business Program  
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### INTRODUCTION

The Bay Area Green Business Program (Program) was initiated in 1996 by ABAG's Hazardous Waste Management Facility Allocation Committee. The Program assists and recognizes businesses, organizations and public agency facilities that voluntarily exceed regulatory compliance to prevent pollution, conserve resources, and minimize waste.

The first businesses were recognized in 1997 in Alameda and Napa Counties. Other counties joined in subsequent years. Since 2007, all nine Bay Area counties have offered the Program. Currently, there are 1,800 firms certified, including 120 public facilities. All are listed on the Program website at [www.greenbiz.ca.gov](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov).

The Program serves small businesses, with a focus on consumer-oriented firms. The diverse roster of participants includes auto body and repair shops, printers, wineries, restaurants, hotels, janitorial services, retail shops, remodeling contractors, attorneys, architects, dentists, landscapers, public agency fleets, police and fire stations, senior centers, K – 12 schools, universities, civic centers and water treatment plants.

Annually, we provide a Program update and ask the Executive Board to recognize the agencies and officials whose facilities have recently been designated as Green Businesses. Since March 2007, 25 public agency facilities have been added to our Directory (see Attachment A). The number includes a very significant "first." This year, we are proud to announce the first certification of a U.S. Congressman's office: the district office of United States Congresswoman Anna Eshoo in Palo Alto.

### ACTION REQUESTED

Staff requests that the Executive Board recognize the 25 Certified Green Business public facilities as environmental leaders who are protecting the environment and public health, providing a safer workplace, reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, and setting an exemplary example for businesses, residents and other public agencies in their communities and our region.



## STATUS REPORT

The Bay Area Green Business Program had another very busy and successful year. Collectively, the nine counties added 498 businesses to the listings-an increase of 36%. Most counties continue to experience high demand and some have waiting lists.

Certifications occur at the county level. The County Coordinators recruit and assist businesses through the process. They also coordinate the participation of the public agencies, utilities and other partners who ensure that prospective green businesses meet the Program standards.

The regional office, staffed by ABAG, facilitates ongoing collaboration among the county coordinators to ensure program consistency, the efficient development of materials, and maintenance of the website and other resources. The regional coordinator also seeks new funding opportunities to expand the local programs and support additional marketing, measurement, web and other resources at the regional level, and responds to inquiries from jurisdictions interested in initiating Green Business Programs..

County status and highlights of recent accomplishments include:

- **Alameda County** has 410 Green Businesses. As one of the first counties to offer the program, Alameda has been busy recertifying businesses, some for the fourth time, and responding to increased demand. Alameda County is currently celebrating its 12<sup>th</sup> year certifying Green Businesses by making stronger connections to Green Jobs and Green Economy efforts in the East Bay.
- **Contra Costa County** has 360 Green Businesses. In 2008, they celebrated their ten year anniversary, created a program video, and intensified efforts to attract businesses in far East County. With 120 recertifications this year, the County developed guidelines to streamline the process. The new procedures were tested to ensure they achieve the same high level of integrity, and are available to all counties. The County also led efforts to develop higher certification standards for the regional program.
- **Marin County** has 346 Green Businesses. The County launched their Program in 2002 as a pilot with City of Novato, and quickly expanded countywide. Last year, the Program successfully worked with the County's Fairgrounds to assist them with obtaining certification and with organizing their 2007 "Greenest County Fair on Earth" event.
- **Napa County** has 54 Green Businesses certified since reactivating its Program in 2007. The Program formed key partnerships with the Napa Vintners Association, which is helping to recruit its members to the Program, and with the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency, which has assigned staff to expand the Program to office and retail operations, hotels, restaurants and other businesses.
- **San Mateo County** has 95 Green Businesses. The County launched its pilot Program in July 2007 with six cities. Since then, four more have signed on: Half Moon Bay, Pacifica, Portola Valley and San Bruno. The partnership with San Francisco International Airport and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission has resulted

in 12 businesses certified to date. The County continues to build partnerships to support program expansion, with the goal of offering the program countywide.

- **San Francisco** has 140 Green Businesses. In early 2009, the program developed a new San Francisco specific logo and website to target local consumers. The program is working with consultants to develop strategy for expansion to new sectors. San Francisco has led the statewide efforts to develop an online, web-based green business tracking and measurement database to be launched Summer 2009 .
- **Santa Clara County** has 404 Green Businesses. More than half of those businesses have been certified in the past two years, as the desire to make their business practices more environmentally sound has grown to an all time high. It is rewarding to have so many public agencies setting the example for the business community by becoming certified themselves..
- **Sonoma County** has 63 Green Businesses. For several years, the County focused its Program on wineries and regulated businesses such as auto repair shops. Recently, the Program established a partnership with the county Economic Development Board that has provided the staff resources needed to work with a variety of new industries.
- **Solano County** has 3 Green Businesses. The County launched its pilot program to auto repair shops and other regulated businesses in July 2007. The Board of Supervisors authorized a second pilot year with expansion to additional industries in 2008. Several businesses are close to certification and a number of others are in the pipeline.
- **Regional Program:**

**Checklists:** The Program completed the systematic update of all checklists, finishing up with the Pollution Prevention section earlier this year. A new checklist, currently in final draft form, was developed for Custodial/Janitorial Services. The original General Standards checklist was substantially revised for use with Small Manufacturers.

**Measurement System:** A generous \$90,000 grant from longtime partner Cal EPA Department of Toxic Substances Control provided foundation funding to develop a measurement system that will collect data from Green Businesses and calculate the amount of energy and water conserved, waste diverted, pollution prevented and greenhouse gas emissions reduced. Many counties in the Bay Area and throughout the state contributed additional funds so that the System could add additional functions. Two in particular will significantly enhance program efficiency.

First, the system will operate as a program management tool. Many procedures currently handled by mail, email, fax and phone will be automated and become paper-free. This feature is expected to speed up the certification process by 30%.

Second, the system will convert the Green Business listings to a searchable database format. The online listings will be updated instantaneously whenever a business achieves Green Business status. The system will allow Green Businesses to have more descriptive listings, and will make it easier for potential customers to find Green Businesses. It will also eliminate the need to manually update the website to add new businesses.

System development is being managed by the San Francisco Green Business Program with the support and participation of all coordinators in the Bay Area and beyond. This has been a significant undertaking for all involved, most particularly San Francisco staff. Once completed, the system will be available to Green Business Programs throughout the state. It is being closely watched by US EPA for its potential for use elsewhere in the country.

**Website:** Implementation of the measurement system will include a significant improvement to the Program website by converting the business listings to a searchable database. Along with that change we are updating the look, reorganizing the site and adding new features. Green Businesses will soon be able to take advantage of an online marketing toolkit developed for the Program by Contra Costa County. Support from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District towards Program outreach helped to fund the web improvements.

**Outreach:** With increased interest in green business practices, the Program continues to be featured in newspaper and magazine articles, and on radio and television spots. Local coordinators have established relationships with local and regional business journals and magazines that feature Bay Area Green Businesses regularly. The Program and our businesses are also represented in two very successful coupon books, the Green Zebra and the EcoMetro Guides.

#### **PROGRAM EXPANSION:**

Developed in the Bay Area 14 years ago, the Program now serves as a model for other counties in California and beyond. Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, San Diego and Santa Barbara counties and the City of Santa Monica offer Green Business Programs. Collectively, they have certified close to 300 businesses. The City of Los Angeles is organizing a program. Fresno and Humboldt counties and the cities of Long Beach and Torrance have made inquiries.

To promote efficiency, consistency and innovation, Bay Area coordinators joined with counterparts around the state, US EPA's Environmental Finance Center Region 9, and Cal EPA-DTSC to establish the California Green Business Programs Network. Members meet at least twice a year to discuss program expansion and issues of mutual interest. The Network has greatly facilitated communications, information and task sharing over the past year as the coordinators and contractor worked together to design and build the new measurement system.

The Program has attracted attention from beyond California. Montgomery County, Maryland is about to launch a program. Westchester County, New York is organizing.

#### **CERTIFIED PUBLIC AGENCIES**

The Program helps businesses implement environmentally-responsible practices. Many public agencies serve as "certification partners," verifying that businesses have achieved Program standards. Many agencies provide funding support to their county programs.

More than 120 public agencies have taken their commitment a further step by successfully seeking certification.

Certified public entities include fleet maintenance operations, print shops, corporation yards, civic centers, fire stations, a city, two towns, elementary schools, water districts, sanitary districts, waste authorities, libraries, performing arts and senior centers, county supervisors and state legislators offices and, for the first time this year, the district office of a United States Congress Member, the Honorable Anna Eshoo. The 25 public facilities certified this year are listed on Attachment A.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you would like to seek green business certification for facilities in your jurisdiction, please contact me at 510/464-7961 or at [ceils@abag.ca.gov](mailto:ceils@abag.ca.gov) or your county Green Business coordinator. The County Coordinators are listed on the "Contact Us" page of the program website at: [www.greenbiz.ca.gov](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov).

## **Attachment A**

The following city, county, special district, state and federal facilities achieved Green Business status since March 2007:

### **Alameda County**

Assemblymember Mary Hayashi, Hayward Office  
Tri-Cities One-Stop Career Center, Newark  
Union Sanitary District

### **Contra Costa County**

511 Contra Costa, Pleasant Hill Office  
City of El Cerrito, City Hall  
City of Lafayette, City Offices

### **Napa County**

Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency

### **San Mateo County**

City of Redwood City, City Hall  
City of Millbrae, City Hall  
Millbrae Public Library  
San Mateo County Human Services Agency – Redwood City Office  
San Mateo County Human Services Agency – San Carlos Office

### **Santa Clara County**

Office of Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo, 14th District  
City of Campbell  
City of Gilroy Police Department  
City of Saratoga  
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Office of Supervisor Ken Yeager, District 4  
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Office of Supervisor Dave Cortese, District 3  
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, Office of Supervisor Liz Kniss, District 5  
Santa Clara County Controller-Treasurer, ASAP/HARP  
Santa Clara County Office of County Counsel, Hedding Street Office  
Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health  
Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations  
Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department – Administration  
Santa Clara County Department of Planning and Development